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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/928,339	08/14/2001	Tokuju Oikawa	2870-0171P	6675

2292 7590 08/01/2002

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EXAMINER

CHEA, THORL

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1752

DATE MAILED: 08/01/2002

6

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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HCT

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. 09/928,339	Applicant(s) OIKAWA, TOKUJU	
	Examiner Thorl Chea	Art Unit 1752	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 August 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

#### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                      4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                      5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 5.                      6) ☐ Other:

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The language in claim 1 "film surface pH of the image-forming layer side of the support is substantially unchanged" is indefinite since this the pH value is so relative to the time and circumstances that the "unchanged value" cannot be determined in the absence of providing a specific condition or value.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily

Art Unit: 1752

published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1, 9 -14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over either Hirano et al (Hirano) Inoue et al.

The composition of the claimed material that meet the condition (II) of the claimed invention is disclosed in Hirano Examples 1-2 in columns 83-84 wherein the material contains nucleating agents 1, 2 or 3 in column 83 and the compound F in column 84. Note also the compound in columns 6-7, 11-16 and the nucleating agent in column 19 and Inoue et al in column 44, nucleating agent H-1 and compound G in column 45. Hirano and Inoue are silence with respect to the surface pH. However, since the composition of the material is the same or similar, it is asserted that this pH is inherent to the material of Hirano et al and Inoue , and in the absence of showing otherwise, it is asserted that the invention as claimed is either anticipated by or found obvious over Hirano et al.

6. Claims 1, 4-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent NO. 112072 (JP'072).

Art Unit: 1752

The photothermographic material of claim 1 is taught in the abstract of the JP'072, which contains nucleating agent and the compound of formula (A) of the claimed invention. Accordingly, the claimed invention lacks novelty.

7. Claims 1-16, 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent NO. 112072 (JP'072). The JP'072 discloses a photothermographic material that meet condition (II) claimed in the present claimed invention. On page 13 of the translation, it is disclosed that the use of ammonia to adjust the pH film of 5.5 or less. JP'072 does not disclose the amount of  $\text{NH}^+$  of 0.06 mmol/m<sup>2</sup> or less. However, this ammonium ion can be produced by the interaction of ammonia with water in aqueous coating solution. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to use the ammonia to adjust the pH film of 5.5 or less to provide a material of the claimed invention. The film pH of the claimed invention presented in claim 14-15 is 6.0 or less, therefore, the amount of ammonium ion in the film are same or similar.

8. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent NO. 112072 (JP'072) as applied to claims 1-16, 18-20 above, and further in view of Ito et al. Ito et al in column 82 lines 16-30 discloses phosphorus oxide-derive compound as contrast enhancer for a photothermographic material. it would have been obvious to the worker of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the phosphorus oxide-derive compound taught in Ito et al as contrast enhancer for the material of JP'072, and thereby provide a material as claimed.

**Conclusion**

9. The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thorl Chea whose telephone number is (703)308-3498. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (9:30 - 6:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Janet C Baxter can be reached on (703)308-2303. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)872-9301 for regular communications and (703)872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-0661.

tchea *tlh*  
July 26, 2002

*Thorl Chea*  
Thorl Chea  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1752